

Remarks:

Claims 1-7 and 10-20 remain for consideration in this application. Claims 8 and 9 have been withdrawn from consideration.

In the Office Action dated April 13, 2005, claims 1-7 and 10-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Noiles (US 4,676,798). Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 15, and 17 to recite that the retaining ring includes a catch leg which engages a catch ledge formed in the rigid shell when the prosthesis is assembled. As explained below, Applicants submit that this feature is not taught by Noiles.

Using the Examiner's notations (as opposed to the names given in the Noiles reference), Noiles teaches a prosthesis in which a rigid ring 13 is attachable to the *liner* 12 and not to the shell 64 as the Examiner purports. Fig. 1 of Noiles clearly shows that ring 13 engages only liner 12 and does not even contact shell 64. Further, the retaining ring of Noiles does not include the presently claimed structure of a catch leg which engages a catch ledge (also not present in Noiles) when the prosthesis is assembled.

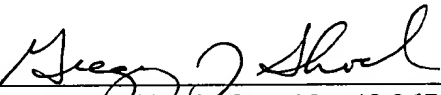
The structure of the present invention presents an advantage over the Noiles prosthesis in that a rigid retainer ring is attached to a rigid shell thus forming a "rigid to rigid" connection. In Noiles, the rigid ring is attached to a yieldable liner (a rigid to yieldable connection), and the yieldable liner is attached to the rigid shell (a yieldable to rigid connection). See, Noiles's discussion of the liner to shell attachment in column 7, lines 5-27. The rigid-to-rigid connection of the present invention greatly assists in securing the liner in the shell thereby reducing the likelihood of dislocations attendant with prior art prostheses.

Likewise, the other Noiles reference cited by the Examiner (U.S. 4,678,472) does not disclose a retainer ring or shell wall including the presently claimed structural features which, when the prosthesis is assembled, become engaged to secure the liner in the shell. Again, the retainer ring of Noiles is attached only to the liner.

In view of the forgoing, Applicants request that the §102(b) rejection be withdrawn and a Notice of Allowance be timely issued.

Any additional fee which is due in connection with this amendment should be applied against our Deposit Account No. 19-0522.

Respectfully submitted,

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